



BE YOUR OWN BOSS: Is Self-Employment For Me?

FACILITATOR GUIDE

SESSION OVERVIEW

This 45 - 60 minute session provides students with an introduction to starting their own business. Students will learn about being self-employed and the skills and characteristics of people who are successful in starting up their own business. Students will learn the basics of assessing the need (a market assessment) for a product or service, and will develop a simple business plan.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Students will learn about self-employment as a work option and potential career direction.
2. Students will learn about the required skills of being self-employed.
3. Students will learn about the benefits and challenges of being self-employed.
4. Students will learn about the 10 keys for success in business.
5. Students will be able to assess a business idea and how to develop the framework for a business plan.

MATERIALS

Hand Out 1 – Potential New Products or Services

Hand Out 2 – 100 Business Ideas

Hand Out 3 – Market Analysis

Hand Out 4 – Business Plan

Self-Employment: Is it for me?, Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry



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OVERVIEW AND TIMELINES

Introduction – What is Self-Employment?	1 Minute
What's Your E.Q.? (Entrepreneurial Quotient)	4 Minutes
Benefits and Challenges of Being Self-Employed	5 Minutes
Do You Have the Right Stuff?	5 Minutes
Generating Business Ideas	10 Minutes
Group Work on a Business Plan	20 Minutes
Wrap Up	5 Minutes

ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION – WHAT IS SELF-EMPLOYMENT?

Engage class in a brief discussion about the option of being self-employed. Ask the students to provide characteristics of being self-employed such as: having no boss, paying yourself out of your own profits, often working out of your own home etc. Ask the students if they or their parents are self-employed. Students' self-employment experiences may include babysitting, lawn or garden maintenance, painting, paper delivery, and/or farming.

Define the term "entrepreneur" and discuss how it closely relates to the concept of self-employment.

Entrepreneur Facts For Facilitators:

The word "entrepreneur" originates from the French work, *entreprendre*, which means "to undertake." In a business context, it means to start a business. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary presents the definition of an entrepreneur as one who organizes, manages and assumes the risks associated with a business or enterprise.

There are a variety of interpretations as to what "entrepreneurship" encompasses. Many believe that the difference between entrepreneurship and self-employment is that the former includes innovation (the development of new products, methods or markets), high risk, speed and amount of wealth creation.



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WHAT'S YOUR E.Q. (ENTREPRENEURIAL QUOTIENT)?

Ask students to respond to 15 questions on pages 7-8 of **Self-Employment: Is it for me?** Read the questions aloud; have students respond on paper and debrief with information at the end of the mini-quiz. This will get students looking at their own tendencies and openness to self-employment as a career option.

BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF BEING SELF-EMPLOYED

Ask students to identify the benefits of being self-employed.

Top Up List For Facilitators – Benefits of Being Self-Employed

- Satisfaction of creating your own job
- Opportunity to follow your heart – be “who and what you want to be”
- Variety
- Feeling of control
- Opportunity to be creative
- More tax benefits /business deductions
- Flexible schedule / hours of work
- No dress code
- Opportunity for a healthier lifestyle
- Can work from almost any location
- Business can be built around hobbies, skills & family (i.e. family business)

Ask students to identify the challenges of being self-employed.

Top Up List For Facilitators – Challenges of Being Self-Employed

- Long hours
- No benefits
- Loss of structure
- Isolation
- Paperwork
- Unpredictable income
- Constant pressure to maintain sales or amount of work coming in
- Potential for loss
- Requires discipline, self direction and risk taking



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DO YOU HAVE THE RIGHT STUFF?

Ask students to identify some characteristics that describe successful entrepreneurs. Have them consider successful business people in their families or circles of friends. Note responses on a whiteboard or flipchart.

Top Up List For Facilitators – Characteristics of Successful Entrepreneurs

- Educated
- Competitive
- Willing to take calculated risks
- Proactive
- Self-confident
- Willing to work long hours
- Self directed /highly motivated
- Effective communicator
- Self-starter
- Independent
- Copes well with ambiguous environment
- Healthy

Distribute **Self-Employment: Is it for me?** Ask students to check off the traits that describe them in “**How Can You Identify an Entrepreneur?**” on page 6.

GENERATING BUSINESS IDEAS

We occasionally come across products or services that make us think, “What a great idea!” or “Why didn’t I think of that?” Survey the group for examples of products or services they can think of (“Post-It” notes, flavoured bottled water, screen-sweeps, drive-through coffee bars...).

Many successful businesses have started as a result of a problem that needed to be solved. Often you hear people say, “Why don’t they make _____?” or “Why doesn’t someone do _____?”

Distribute **Potential New Products or Services Hand Out** to students. Assign them to work in pairs to generate some business ideas based upon a problem or need that they have experienced as students.



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<i>Examples for Teachers of Problems /Needs and Related Potential New Product</i>	
PROBLEM OR NEED	POTENTIAL NEW PRODUCT OR SERVICE
1. Someone to check my house when I am away	House Sitter
2. Seniors needing odd jobs done	Handy Helper
3. Animal caretaker while away on vacation	Animal Sitter
4. Lawn care	Lawn Care and Gardener
5. Signs for homes & businesses	Sign Maker
6. Helper in the home for odd jobs	Home Helper
7. Help with developing a web page	Web Page Designer

Debrief with student lists and distribute **100 Business Ideas Hand Out** for additional small business concepts.

MARKET ANALYSIS and BUSINESS PLAN

Ask students with similar business interests to form working teams of 3-4. Ask teams to clearly identify the need and the product /service they wish to develop. Distribute **Market Analysis Hand Out**. Have teams work through and respond to the questions.

A Business Plan is like a “road map” and is essential for success in any small business. Ask students what benefits arise from having a business plan?

<i>Top Up List for Facilitators – Benefits of a Business Plan</i>
-Clarifies the business idea
-Helps to identify potential opportunities that might otherwise be overlooked
-Provides a standard by which to measure progress
-Helps to anticipate and adapt to change
-Helps to identify potential weaknesses that can be addressed prior to start up
-Helps to obtain financing if required

Distribute **Business Plan Hand Out**. Ask student teams to dream up a business name and complete the business plan. Facilitator / teacher may circulate to offer ideas and feedback.

Ask students to briefly present their business plans to the larger group. What skills and training might be needed to make these plans feasible?



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WRAP UP

Ask students to consider why some businesses fail. Review “The Dirty Dozen” on page 22 of Self-Employment: Is it For Me? – Twelve common reasons for business failure.



Potential New Products or Services

Brainstorm some needs or problems that you have experienced, such as products or services you were looking for but could not find. List them in the left hand column. In the corresponding column, try to brainstorm some potential new products or services that would fill the need or solve the problem. Be creative and think outside the box!

Problem or Need

Potential New Product or Service

[illegible]

100 Business Ideas

AUTOMOBILE

- Waxing
- Cleaning
- Repair
- Paint touch-ups
- Off-site service
- Messenger service
- Small moves
- People/product transportation

DESIGN, PRODUCTION & SALES

- Handicrafts
- Jewelry
- Dried flowers
- Lingerie
- Art & decorative work
- Gift baskets
- Products of wood/leather/stone
- Recycled products
- Cultural products
- Functional products
- Clothing

RENTAL

- Electrical household appliances & furniture
- Costumes & ceremonial clothing
- Records, CDs, games, videos
- Machinery
- Tools
- Photos, paintings, works of art

SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES

- Recreation, travel, hobbies
- Workshops, seminars, training
- Care for children and/or elderly
- Bed and breakfast
- Services for elderly, parents, tourists
- Tutoring

SERVICES FOR BUSINESS

- Storage
- Plant care
- Cleaning services
- Office equipment / supplies
- Invoicing
- Customized training
- Computers
- Messenger & transportation services
- Webpage design, graphic design
- Telephone reception, cellular phone, pager
- Recovery of polluting materials
- Writing, translation
- Secretarial, desktop publishing services
- Security services
- Subcontracting
- Bookkeeping, accounting
- Human resource recruitment
- Electricity & telephone invoice verification

HEALTH RELATED SERVICES

- Physical activities
- Personal growth (books/courses)
- Herbs
- Massage
- Alternative medicine
- Physiotherapy
- Psychotherapy
- Foot care
- Home recovery support
- Meditation and relaxation

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

- Cabinetmaking
- Carpentry
- Plumbing
- Electrical
- Painting, joint treatment
- Doors, windows, screens
- Security systems
- Roof finishing & repair
- Chimney installation & sweeping
- Decoration
- Restoration, renovation
- Installation of anti-slip products
- Assembly of furniture, BBQ, etc
- House cleaning
- Furniture, blind, carpet cleaning
- Window & wall cleaning
- Electrical household appliance repair
- Grass cutting, leaf raking, tree pruning
- Snow removal
- Installation of outside lighting
- Construction of walls
- Pool maintenance

OTHER SERVICES / PRODUCTS

- Leisure, sports activities
- Sharpening of knives
- Baking special products
- Animal care and boarding
- Mailing
- Operation of dispensing equipment
- Farming, raising animals
- Forest harvesting
- Imports and sales
- Internet
- Personal safety objects
- Planning events and parties
- Tourism products: guided tours, packages, fishing, etc
- Recycling of all kinds
- Repair of skidoos, lawnmowers, small motors
- Photography
- Caterer
- Home sales

Source: Western Economic Diversification Canada: I Am An Entrepreneur: Self Assessment Guide



Market Analysis

Answer the following questions:

- 1. Who is your target market (potential clients)?**
(Families, businesses, children, the elderly, _____?)

- 2. Where is your market located?**
(In your neighborhood, your town /city, _____?)

- 3. Will this market continue to grow? Why? Influences?**

- 4. Who is your competition?**
(Is anyone else providing a similar job /service /product in this location?)

- 5. What will you charge for your product or service?**

Note: Sources of information might include the Yellow Pages, Chambers of Commerce, City Hall, Statistics Canada, potential clients and suppliers.



Business Plan

Company Information

Business Name:

Group Members (shareholders):

Product or Service

Describe your product or service and its features, advantages and benefits.

Market

Summarize the findings of your market analysis here.

Marketing Plan

Explain how you will inform your customers about your product or service. Will you advertise in the local paper, hand out flyers, develop brochures, and or sell door-to-door (advertising)? How will you get the product to your customer (distribution)? Will you give discounts, coupons, etc. (promotion)?



Business Plan - Continued

Operations

Explain how and where you will operate your business. What materials and equipment will you need and what will they cost? What help (staff) will you need?

Management and Timetable

Explain how the business will be managed. Identify what steps need to be taken to establish your business and when they need to be completed.

Budget

Estimate the cost of starting and operating your business by identifying what equipment and supplies you will need, what staff you will have to pay, the costs to market your product or service, and any other administrative costs.